

**ESSENTIAL GUIDE**

# A-boards and tables and chairs

The A-boards used by businesses to advertise the goods and services they sell and the tables and chairs put out by restaurants and cafes can often be controversial.

It is an area where the needs of parents with pushchairs or toddlers, those with mobility issues and people with disabilities and their carers can clash with the needs of businesses, especially those away from the main drag, which have to attract customers.

Striking a balance between those competing priorities and raising awareness of the rules is key.

## Who makes the rules and who makes sure they are stuck to?

Kent County Council (KCC) is in charge of the vast majority of roads and pavements in the district so set and enforce the rules around A-boards and tables and chairs (see below).

We have an agreement with KCC that our Enforcement officers, who regularly patrol the district, will help to monitor the situation and advise businesses on best practice. We receive a small number of complaints.

As well as dealing with ad-hoc problems and informal monitoring of the situation, we also work with KCC to periodically carry out more formal checks with the next one due in the spring.

During this process we ensure all businesses have a copy of the rules.

This is an effective tactic in the short term but shops and restaurants can have a relatively high turnover of staff and making them all aware of KCC's expectations is a real challenge.

KCC and CCC can take legal action against those who persistently break the rules. Because of the delicate balancing act that is needed, this is seen as a last resort.

## What are the alternatives to A-boards?

Businesses could use fixed wall boards, mounted display boxes, window displays, hanging signs, changeable cloth signs, display screens or light bars. Many city centre businesses do this.

This list is not exhaustive but, depending on the circumstances, some or all of them could require

planning permission from us. For advice contact, Canterbury City Council's planning team.

## A-boards - the rules

Businesses need to fill out an A-board Requirements Form

Where possible, A-board should be placed on a private forecourt off the highway or within a tables and chairs enclosure if you have one

All A-boards placed on a street or pavement should be able to be moved freely and easily and should not be attached to any sort of object

While positioned on the highway, they should be stable and kept upright. This can include being safely and discreetly weighed down if required

The A-board should not cause any damage to the highway or stop surface water draining away or obstruct access to any premises

A-boards will be the owner's responsibility when placed on the highway and KCC will not be liable for any damage or injury caused. The owner should hold public liability insurance up to the value of £5 million against any liability, loss or damage, claim or court case

The A-board should relate to the normal business of the premises

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# A-boards and tables and chairs

A business may only place one A-board. If a business has two entrances on two different streets, they may be able to place one on each street if there is adequate footway space

A-boards may only be displayed directly outside of the business, during business hours. It is to be removed outside of these hours and should not be positioned remotely from the property

A-boards must not distract drivers or pedestrians

A-boards should be easily detectable and noticeable to users who have visual impairments and situated in such a way that they can be negotiated with ease by users with mobility problems. There should be a minimum width of 2m unobstructed footway in busy areas. For less busy areas, a minimum unobstructed footway width of 1.5m should be maintained at all times

No A-board may be positioned in areas of high pedestrian flow if specified by KCC

The A-board should be between 0.8m to 1.05m high and 0.45m to 0.7m wide

An A-board should be removed or repositioned with immediate effect if requested by KCC or member of the emergency services or an officer from CCC

## Tables and chairs - the rules

Businesses need to apply for a permit

A detailed plan must be provided to KCC clearly showing the extent of the area they wish to use including dimensions.

Tables, chairs and street furniture must remain within the designated area at all times

Every table, chair and item of temporary street furniture needs to be positioned so it does not stop waste water draining away nor obstruct access to any premises unless the permission of the occupier of those premises has been obtained.

The licence owner will be charged a fee of £47.50 if, following a routine inspection, any infringements of the licence or problems arising out of the use of the site are found.

Any infringements of the licence or problems arising out of the use of the site must be immediately rectified to the satisfaction of KCC.

KCC reserves the right to terminate a licence without notice

No tables, chairs or temporary street furniture shall be left on the highway longer than is necessary and shall be removed or repositioned if required by a police officer or KCC

Tables, chairs and temporary street furniture shall be taken inside and stored during the hours when the business is closed

The owner will hold public liability insurance up to the value of £5 million against any liability, loss or damage, claim of proceeding in respect of the placing and maintaining of the tables, chairs and temporary street furniture. The applicant is required to submit proof of this insurance prior to the licence being issued

No tables, chairs or temporary street furniture sited on a footway are to be placed within 1.2m of the edge of a neighbouring carriageway or road

A minimum clear footway width of 1.5m must be obtained at all times and 2m in busy locations or at busy times. Where this is not achievable, a licence most likely will not be granted

The licensee shall be responsible for keeping the designated area in a clean and tidy condition at all times and shall ensure any associated debris is removed at the end of each day and make good any damage caused to the surface area

Planning permission is required. For advice, contact Canterbury City Council's planning team.

The licence is valid for up to one year and must be renewed annually

To report a problem with an A-board or some tables and chairs, email [streetsceneenforcement@canterbury.gov.uk](mailto:streetsceneenforcement@canterbury.gov.uk)